

# Josiah Finds the Law

Young King Josiah repairs the temple, and the Book of the Law is discovered. When he hears its words, he tears his clothes and leads a national revival.

2 Kings 22:1-20 • 2 Kings 23:1-25

CHARACTERS: Josiah, Hilkiah, Shaphan, Huldah

THEMES: Revival, God's Word, Repentance, Reformation

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JOSIAH WAS EIGHT years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem thirty-one years. He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord and walked in all the ways of his father David, not turning aside to the right or to the left.

In the eighteenth year of his reign, King Josiah sent his secretary Shaphan to the temple of the Lord. 'Go up to Hilkiah the high priest and have him get ready the money that has been brought into the temple. Have them pay the workers who repair the temple.'

While the money was being brought out, Hilkiah the priest found the Book of the Law of the Lord that had been given through Moses. He gave it to Shaphan the secretary, who brought it to the king and read from it in his presence.

When the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, he tore his robes. He commanded, 'Go and inquire of the Lord for me and for the people concerning the words of this book that has been found. Great is the Lord's anger that burns against us because our ancestors have not obeyed the words of this book.'

They went to the prophetess Huldah, who lived in Jerusalem. She said, 'This is what the Lord says: I am going to bring disaster on this place and

its people—all the curses written in the book that was read in the presence of the king. Because they have forsaken me and burned incense to other gods, my anger will be poured out on this place. But as for the king of Judah, tell him this: Because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before the Lord when you heard what I have spoken, and because you tore your robes and wept in my presence, I also have heard you. You will be buried in peace. Your eyes will not see all the disaster I am going to bring on this place.'

Then the king called together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. He went up to the temple with all the people of Judah, from the least to the greatest. He read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant that had been found. The king stood by the pillar and renewed the covenant in the presence of the Lord—to follow the Lord and keep his commands with all his heart and soul. And all the people pledged themselves to the covenant.

Josiah then led the most thorough reform in Judah's history. He destroyed the pagan altars, removed the idols, and celebrated Passover as it had not been observed since the days of the judges. Neither before nor after Josiah was there a king like him who turned to the Lord with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his strength, in accordance with all the Law of Moses.